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## **Testimony Given on Kevin's Law**

**Senate Health Policy Committee considers George's "Kevin's Law" proposal**

LANSING - The Senate Health Policy Committee conducted hearings today to consider the Assisted Outpatient Treatment, or "Kevin's Law", package of bills—Senate Bills 683-686. These bills would create an outpatient treatment pathway as an alternative to hospitalization for individuals with severe mental illness. Left untreated, the severely mentally ill often end up homeless or incarcerated, said Sen. Tom George, R-Texas Twp.

"We are grateful to Senator Hammerstrom for understanding the importance of these bills and granting us a hearing," George said. "This is a big step in getting people the help that they need before anything regrettable happens."

Having worked on this issue since his days in the House, Sen. George created this legislation in response to the August 2000 beating death of Kevin Heisinger in the Kalamazoo bus station by a person with severe mental illness who was not compliant with treatment.

"The Heisinger family is not from Michigan, but since Kevin's death was in Kalamazoo, Michigan will always be part of our identity," said Charles Heisinger, Kevin's father from St. Louis, MO. "We care deeply about this community. We care deeply about the good people of Michigan who are at risk, just the way Kevin was at risk when he stopped at a bus terminal restroom on his way to college."

Among others, testimony was heard from Heisinger and Jonathan Stanley of the Treatment and Advocacy Center in Washington, D.C.